

# WEST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PROJECT

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## NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENT SURVEY REPORT

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Neighborhood Resident Survey

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### Summary

The West Side Revitalization Resident Survey was conducted in May and June, 1979 in the 60 square block area surrounding West Side Park. Ten staff members of Tri-City Citizens Union for Progress surveyed 256 families with interviews lasting about half an hour. Approximately 10% of those interviewed were Spanish speaking.

Crime, drugs, problems with youth and lack of police protection are clearly the problems that most concern residents of this area. Public transportation is considered the most important advantage of the neighborhood. Most people originally moved to the neighborhood because of the larger apartments and because they considered the neighborhood to be better than where they lived before. Many had to move from their former residences because of highway or renewal projects or general deterioration and fires in their neighborhood.

About half the families in the West Side area have experienced some kind of crime in the past year. Residents take measures to protect themselves from crime in a variety of ways, including asking neighbors to watch their apartments when they go out. Most people believe that the police are not doing a good job in the community and would like to see better police protection to combat crime.

West Side area residents have relatively low incomes. Nearly half are below the federal poverty level. Three-quarters live on some kind of fixed incomes such as social security, welfare, unemployment compensation, pensions, etc. Only half the households have at least one person working. Most jobs are in semi-skilled and unskilled factory and service jobs.

More than 75% of the households are paying more than 25% of their income for rent. Nearly a third are paying more than 50% of their incomes for rent. Families with incomes below \$6,000 a year are especially hard hit.

(over)

## Neighborhood Resident Survey: Summary

There were relatively few complaints about housing maintenance that involved major repairs or structural conditions of the buildings. Most housing complaints involved lack of heat or hot water or the infestation of rodents and roaches.

Nearly a quarter of the families own their own homes. Although half of those tenants interviewed said they had thought of buying a house, less than 10% said they would consider buying a house in this neighborhood.

Neighborhood residents do most of their convenience shopping in the neighborhood, a large part of their food shopping, and buy things like clothing, appliances and furniture in downtown Newark. Most families would like to have a new supermarket in the neighborhood and lower prices.

In terms of community participation, church groups and PTA's showed the greatest involvement of residents.

Conclusion: The West Side community has been hit by problems of crime and declining population due to housing deterioration, and general disinvestment. Neighborhood recovery will depend on:

1. providing support to the core of resident property owners
2. providing more services for the majority population of youth
3. increasing resident participation in community life
4. increasing police protection to the neighborhood residents
5. providing housing at rents or mortgages at a price residents can afford

A comprehensive revitalization plan for the West Side of the 80's is in order.

## HOW THE SURVEY WAS CARRIED OUT

The West Side Revitalization survey was conducted in the 60 square block area bounded by South Orange Avenue on the north, Springfield Avenue on the South, South 10th Street on the East and the Irvington city line on the West. This area in turn was divided into four sub-areas for the purposes of analysis. (See map P. ) Area 1 corresponds to the Tri-City area running from South 17th Street to the Irvington line, and from Springfield Avenue to 16th Avenue. Just east of the Tri-City area, almost surrounding West Side Park is Area 2, bounded by Springfield Avenue, South 17th Street, South 10th Street, 16th Avenue and the park. Areas 3 and 4 are on the northern side of 16th Avenue. Area 3 runs from South 10th Street to South 15th Street to the Irvington line.

A land use survey was conducted in each of these four areas partially for the purpose of estimating the number of households in each area. Approximately 10% of the families in Area 1 (Tri-City area) were interviewed and 5% of the families in the rest of the areas. The families were chosen at random. Any adult over 18 was interviewed, but surveyors in general tried to interview the head of the household if he or she was home. Most of the interviewing was conducted during the day on weekdays, which may be the source of some bias in that families with all adults working during the day were less likely to be interviewed. Interviewers were recruited from the staff and received training in the use of the questionnaire and interview techniques.

Approximately 10 interviewers worked three to four weeks in May and June of 1979 surveying 256 households, with interviews lasting an average of a half hour. They also actively participated in the formulation and revision of the questionnaire. A pre-test was first conducted on 35 respondents and revisions made to the survey questionnaire.

#### A. DESCRIPTION OF THE POPULATION

##### 1. Size of the population, family composition

There were roughly 20,000 people in the survey area in 1970 according to the Census. Census tract 35 covers the Tri-City area (Area 1). Tract 34 corresponds to Area 2 and Tracts 26, 27 and part of 18 correspond to Areas 3 and 4. (See map P.\_\_\_\_)

The land use survey revealed that there are approximately 3,800 housing units in occupied buildings in the neighborhood. If we can assume a 5% vacancy rate, there are approximately 3,600 families in the area. The survey indicated that the average number of people in each household is 3.9. This gives an estimated 1979 population of 14,000 representing a decline of about 30% since 1970. Between 1960 and 1970 the population of the whole area increased drastically, almost doubling in the Tri-City area alone (Area 1, Census tract 35), reflecting the in-migration of black families with young children. Since 1970, the population decline has been due mostly to housing abandonment and not to smaller family sizes. The average family size in 1970 was smaller than at present.

The population is also slightly younger and slightly older now. In 1970, 4% of the population was under 18 years old, while in 1979, this had increased to 52%. The proportion of elderly in the population also seems to have increased since 1970.

##### 2. Length of time in the neighborhood

The average family has lived in the neighborhood for nearly 8 years. (Table I) The influx of new residents in the Tri-City area (Area 1) makes their average lower, almost 7 years. Area 2 has the most stable group, averaging 9 years of residence. This reflects the fact that homeownership is higher in Area 2, and

TABLE I  
LIVING NUMBER OF YEARS  
IN NEIGHBORHOOD

	Average Number of Years	Percent Less than 5 years	Percent More than 10 Years
Total	7.8	46.0%	32.4%
Area 1	6.9	42.3%	29.2%
Area 2	9.2	45.6%	37.9%
Area 3	8.6	49.0%	30.6%
Area 4	8.3	55.0%	37.6%
Homeowners	12.1	16.5%	62.3%
Tenants	6.1	58.5%	22.1%
Cooperative	8.1	20.0%	33.4%

TABLE II - PERCENT OF FAMILIES  
WHO ARE HOMEOWNERS

	Percent Homeowners
Total	24
Area 1	23
Area 2	43
Area 3	8
Area 4	29
Elderly	52

homeowners have lived in the neighborhood for an average of twelve years.

Tenants seem to have a much higher turnover than homeowners. They have been in the neighborhood an average of 6 years. Nearly 60% moved to the area in the last five years, with 40% moving to their present houses during the last two years. Only one-fifth (22%) of the tenants have lived in the neighborhood for ten years or more. In contrast, 62% of the homeowners have lived in the community for more than 10 years.

The great majority of Black residents were originally born in a Southern state and likewise the majority of Puerto Ricans were actually born in Puerto Rico. Most residents had lived somewhere else in Newark, usually the Central Ward, before moving to the West Side area. At least one-fifth had lived in nearby towns, such as Irvington and the Oranges, before moving into the area. Many people retain close ties to their former neighborhoods, and the majority (60%) of those surveyed report that the friends and relatives they spend most of their free time with live outside the neighborhood.

### 3. Homeowners

Nearly one-fourth (24%) of the people interviewed own their own homes, 70% are tenants, and 6% live in cooperative apartments. (Table II). Homeownership appears to be higher than in 1970 when the range in the census tracts for the survey area was 8% to 20%. Area 2 had the highest rate of homeownership (43%) and Area 3, the lowest (only 8%). Forty percent of all owners who were interviewed were over sixty years old. Over half (52%) of all the elderly surveyed were homeowners. Homeowners tend to have higher incomes

than tenants -id more wage earners in their families (an average of 1.1 wage earners in homeowner households as compared to .6 wage earners for tenants).

#### 4. Employment and Sources of Income

Approximately half the population are adults over 18 years old. Of these, one half consider themselves to be part of the labor force, whether employed or unemployed, but only 40% of all adults are working at present. (Table III) The unemployment rate for the area is 22% including those unemployed and looking for work, those temporarily laid off, and those waiting to start a new job. Only 35% of the people in these three categories of 'unemployed' are receiving unemployment compensation payments.

Nearly three-fifths of all adults in homeowner households are in the labor force, one half of renters and nearly two-fifths of cooperative residents. The unemployment rate is highest for renters (28.4%) and lowest for homeowners (9.3%). No attempt was made to estimate teenage unemployment.

More than one-tenth of the total number of adults are disabled and nearly another one tenth (8%) are retired. Over a fifth (21%) of the adults are housewives. The rest are students or involved in other activities.

More than half of all households (52%) have at least one person working at present and nearly one-fifth (17%) have more than one adult employed. (Table IV) However, of the families with only one adult present, in only one fourth (23%) was the adult employed. In contrast, in three fourths of the households with two or more adults, at least one person was working. Over half of those people not working in one adult households are

### III Employment and Other Activities (Percent)

	Total %	Homeowners %	Tenants %	Co-op %
Percent of adults over 18 years old in labor force (employed or unemployed)	50.7	57.3	49.8	37.1*
Unemployment Rate	21.9	9.3	28.4	15.4*
Retired	7.7	13.0	5.0	11.4*
Disabled	11.6	9.9	11.1	22.9*
Performing Household Duties	21.0	13.0	26.9	2.9*
Students	7.3	5.3	5.7	20.0*
Other	1.7	1.5	1.3	5.7*

\*These percentages are based on only 15 interviews, and therefore are less accurate than the other figures.

### IV Employment by Number of Adults in Household (Percent)

Adults Working	Number of Adults in Household					All Households
	1	2	3	4	5	
None	77.3	26.8	23.5	44.4*	0	47.6
One	22.7	52.6	23.5	11.1*	50.0*	34.8
Two or more	----	20.6	52.9	44.4*	50.0*	17.6
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Household Size as percent of all households	43.0	38.0	13.3	3.5	2.3	100%

\*These percentages are based on only 9 cases (four adult household) and 6 cases (5 adult household), and therefore are less accurate than the other figures.

housewives, and one fourth are disabled. The rest are retired (8%) or unemployed (15%). Households, with only one adult represent over two-fifths (43%) of the total households.

Although half the families have at least one person working three-quarters (74%) receive some form of income from social security, welfare, unemployment or workmen's compensation, VA benefits or a private pension or insurance. (Table V) In other words, a fourth of the households both have someone working, and also receive income from other sources. Although the figure of 74% receiving some form of benefits may seem very high, it is probably not unusual. A recent study showed that 61% of the population of Hartford, Connecticut lives on fixed incomes, either welfare, unemployment compensation or social security benefits.\*

Nearly half (48%) the families in the West Side area receive welfare payments--either Aid to Families of Dependent Children (AFDC) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI). More than a quarter (28%) receive Social Security benefits, and nearly a tenth have income from unemployment compensation payments.

Homeowning households, which have a higher proportion of the elderly, are more likely to receive Social Security (43%), but much less likely to receive welfare or SSI (16%).

#### 5. Income

The median income of families interviewed is slightly less than \$6,000. Nearly half (48%) are below the Federal poverty level, adjusted for family size. The census reported that the 1969 median income in the neighborhood ranged from \$5,854 to \$7,291. Between 20% and 30% of the families were below the poverty level.

\*New York Times, August 26, 1979 p. E7

## IV Source of Income Other Than Wages (percent)

	Total	Homeowners	Tenants
Social Security	27.8	42.6	20.1
Unemployment Compensation	7.3	9.8	5.6
Welfare (including SSI)	48.2	16.3	53.6
Workmen's Compensation			
Veterans Benefits	4.8	8.0	2.9
Private Pensions			
Other	- - -	- - -	- - -
None	25.7	41.0	19.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

## V Occupations

	1970 (CENSUS)*		Tri. City Survey
	High Income Block Neighbors	Low Income Block Neighbors	West Side area
Managers & Administrators	2.3	7.8	3.7
Professionals & Technicians	20.8	4.2	9.6
Sales	2.9	2.0	5.3
Craftsmen & Foremen	7.7	9.1	7.4
Clerical	21.7	17.3	10.1
Machine Operators (including Transportation)	25.3	34.5	25.5
Laborers	4.9	6.9	10.6
Service	10.9	18.6	22.4
Private Household	2.7	4.6	5.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*Source: (Peter L. Meyers "Between the Lines and Between the Times: The Marginal Identities of Newark Whites," in Stanley Winters, ed. Newark - an Assessment 1966-1977, 1978)

It is clear that the population is substantially poorer than in 1969. Although the dollar amounts appear to be approximately the same, there has been about a 40% decline in purchasing power since 1969. The increase in the percent below the poverty level is another indicator of this trend.

It should also be noted, however, that the incomes reported do not take into account some changes since 1969. There has been a great increase in the use of food stamps, medicare and Mediceaid, which represent "income" although not represented as such in the income figures. Since much of the income is from welfare, social security, etc., which is not taxable, it represents an equivalent 'take-home' pay which would be slightly higher than for a wage earner's income which is taxed. In addition, the bias in the sample probably results in an underestimate of the median income, since households with all adults working were often not interviewed. Nevertheless, there is no question that incomes have declined in the last ten years.

#### 6. Occupation

Nearly two-thirds of the adults who work are employed in low paying semi-skilled and unskilled factory and service jobs. (Table VI) Many of the service, professional and technical jobs are in the health area.

A comparison of the occupational structure of neighborhood residents in 1979 with that reported in the 1970 census for "high income" and "low income" black neighborhoods in the Newark area\*

\*Peter L. Meyers, 'Between the Lines and Behind the Times: The Marginal Identities of Newark Whites", in Stanley Winters, ed. Newark - an Assessment 1967-1977, 1978

shows that West Side neighborhood residents are employed in far few clerical jobs than either the "high" or "low" income residents in 1970. They are also more concentrated in unskilled factory and service jobs. It is unclear whether this reflects a change in the economic structure of Newark or whether the people in the neighborhood themselves are much more concentrated in certain jobs.

## B. HOW PEOPLE VIEW THE NEIGHBORHOOD

### 1. Neighborhood Name and Size

Nearly two-fifths of the residents call the neighborhood the West Side area or the West Side Park area. Those people mentioning the park specifically tend to be concentrated in Areas 1 and 2 which surrounds the park. About half of the people refer to the neighborhood by the name of the Ward -30% call it the Central Ward and 20% the West Ward. Those most likely to call the neighborhood the West Ward live in Area 4; however 25% in Area 4 call it the Central Ward. Residents of Area 2 are most likely to call the neighborhood the Central Ward rather than the West Ward.

A number of people referred to the neighborhood by other names such as, 'the ghetto', Dodge City, and the jungle. Others called it the 'Tri-City area' and still others refer to their neighborhood by the name of their street.

Most people consider their neighborhood to be their block and the blocks in the immediate area. When asked what are the boundaries of their area, nearly two-thirds responded with boundaries that consisted of four square blocks or less. More than 80% of the homeowners and the elderly view their neighborhood as being as small.

### 2. Reasons People Moved to the Neighborhood

Neighborhood residents said they moved to the West Side area because of bigger, better housing, lower rents and because they consider it a better place to live than where they were before. Over one-fifth mentioned problems with their previous house or neighborhood, such as having to move out because of evictions, fires, and highway or renewal projects.

### 3. Advantages and Disadvantages of the Neighborhood

Near the beginning of the interview, residents were asked what they considered to be problems in the neighborhood, and of those mentioned, which were the most serious. Similarly, they were also asked what they considered to be some advantages of living in the area and which of these they considered to be the most important advantage.

Nearly half consider crime in general, or the lack of police protection in particular, to be the most serious problem in the neighborhood. (Figure VIII) Another 20% are concerned about drugs and problems with youth. Next in importance were housing problems, such as abandonment and fires and problems with garbage and dirty streets. A small number mentioned schools, shopping, lack of organization and unity among neighbors as problems.

Public transportation was mentioned as the most important advantage in the neighborhood by nearly one half of the residents (Figure IX) Nearly one-fifth felt there were no advantages, especially those living in Area 3. Other advantages mentioned included low rent, closeness to jobs, hospitals and doctors; convenient shopping and neighborhood activities; good schools; and friendly neighbors.

Residents were asked to rank eleven services as "very good", "just OK", and "pretty bad". Some people didn't have a specific opinion or experience with some services. For instance, one half didn't give an opinion on child care services, one third on activities for teenagers, and one fourth on health services and public schools. However, almost everyone expressed opinions on the other services.

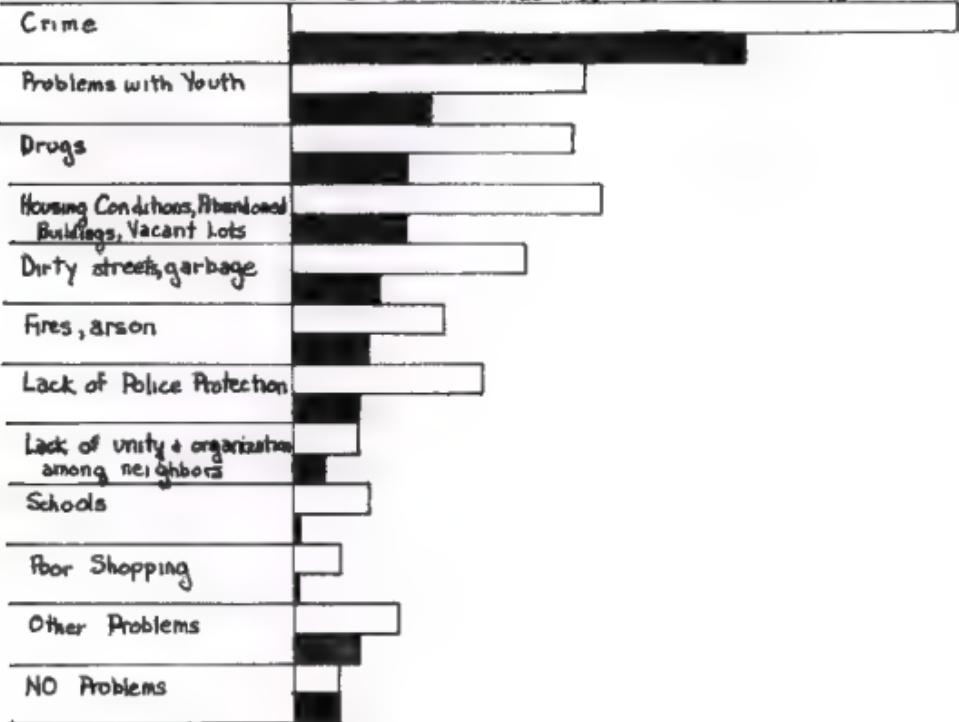
## VIII Neighborhood Problems

 Mentioned as Problem

Considered Most Serious Problem in Neighborhood

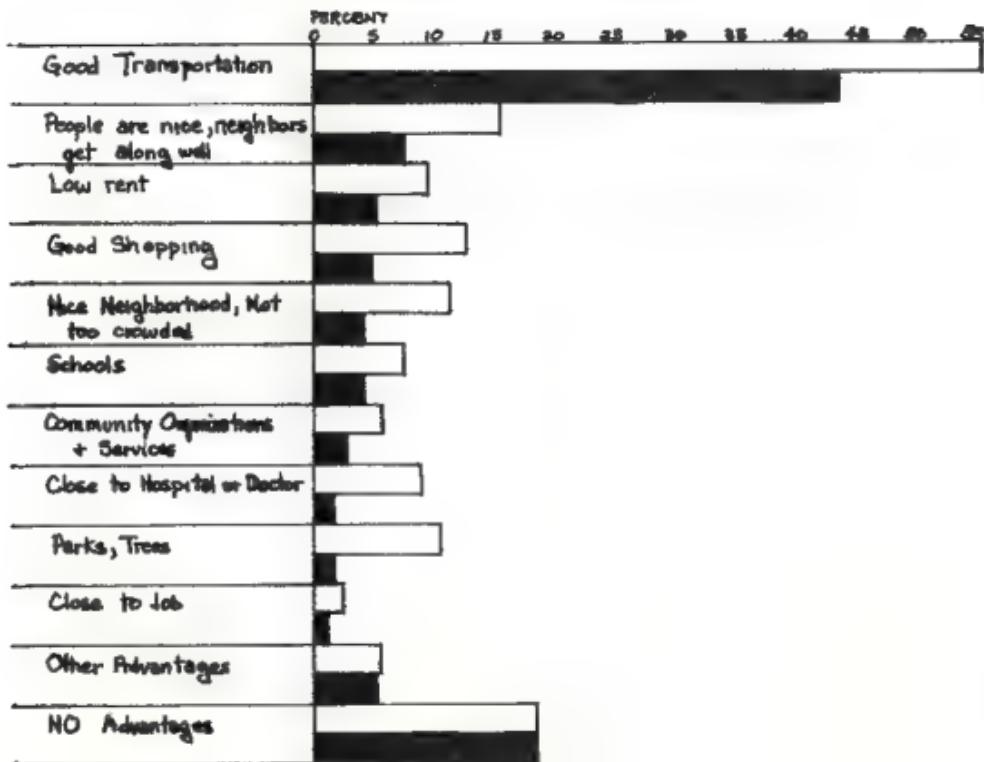
PERCENT

0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55



## IX Neighborhood Advantages

 Mentioned as Advantage  
Considered most important Advantage:



Residents are clearly most satisfied with public transportation and fire protection. (Figure X) Homeowners expressed especial satisfaction with the services of the fire department. People were most critical of police protection and the lack of activities for teenagers.

Garbage collection, child care services, street cleaning, parks and recreation and health services all received slightly better than a "just OK" rating. Residents of cooperative buildings especially expressed satisfaction with child care and health services perhaps reflecting their greater knowledge and use of Tri-City's services.

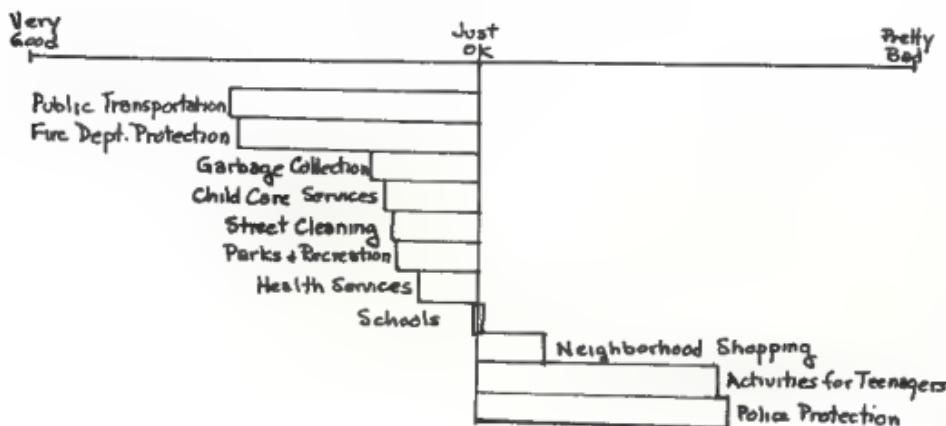
There seems to be more ambivalence about public schools and neighborhood shopping. Both received close to 'just OK' ratings and both were mentioned as being both advantages and problems in the community.

#### 4. General Feelings about the Neighborhood

More than half the people in the neighborhood feel that it has gotten worse in the period they have lived here. Only one out of eight feel it has improved. However, about an equal number believe the neighborhood will improve in the future. Compared to the general population of the study area, residents of Area 3 are more likely to believe that the neighborhood has gotten worse in the past and are more pessimistic about the future. Area 1 residents in contrast, are more optimistic about the future of the neighborhood and more likely than others in the community to believe there was improvement in the past. Homeowners are also more optimistic than other people in the area.

Residents were asked to rate the neighborhood overall as a place to live. Those in Area 1 gave the neighborhood a higher rating than those in the other parts of the study area. When asked if they had the opportunity, would they move out of the neighborhood or stay, over two-thirds said they would move. One-third of those who would like to stay in Newark (either in this neighborhood or elsewhere), one-third would move to nearby towns, and the rest would either move somewhere else in New Jersey or to another state.

## X. Evaluation of Neighborhood Services



## C. SANITATION AND GENERAL APPEARANCE OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Dirty streets and problems with garbage were mentioned by nearly one fifth of the residents as a problem in the community, and 7% thought this was the most serious problem. When asked to evaluate neighborhood services, most people felt that garbage collection and street cleaning were better than 'just OK'.

### 1. Garbage Collection

A large majority of the residents are aware of what days the garbage is collected (only 7% said they didn't know or reported the wrong days). Most people also seem aware of the time of day garbage is picked up, although almost a fifth felt there was no set schedule.

Nearly half the people put out their garbage the night before and another third before 7 a.m. the day of pick up. Plastic bags for garbage are used by three-quarters of the residents.

A relatively large proportion (83%) of the residents reported that streets are cleaned on Mondays and Tuesdays. A similar percentage reported that all or almost all of their neighbors move their cars on street cleaning days.

Residents were asked if they felt the streets and sidewalks on their block were 'fairly clean', somewhat littered' or 'very dirty'. Over half (56%) felt their streets and sidewalks were "fairly clean" and only 15% felt they were "very dirty".

Vacant lots and vacant buildings can affect the appearance of a community. More than half (59%) reported having vacant lots on their block that needed cleaning. More Area 2 residents reported vacant lots (86%) than those in Area 1 (47%).

Nearly two thirds of the people interviewed felt that vacant buildings should be torn down. Of those who felt that these buildings should be rehabilitated, the majority indicated they thought the city government should fix them up. A number of others felt the owner (or previous owner) should renovate them.

## D CRIME

Crime was clearly seen as the most serious problem in the neighborhood. Indeed almost two-fifths (40%) of the residents consider the neighborhood to be "very unsafe". Nevertheless, more than half believe the neighborhood to be 'moderately safe' and another 8% believe it is 'very safe'. This may reflect that most people are concerned with crime, but still believe that the neighborhood is not quite as unsafe as some other neighborhoods. Homeowners are more likely to see the neighborhood as safer than renters.

Over two-fifths of the residents believe that crime has increased in the past year, but a slightly greater number (48%) think it has stayed the same. Only 8% feel that crime has decreased.

A number of questions were asked about ways people protect themselves from crime and how it affects their daily lives. Forty percent report that they do not return home alone after dark, and 45% said that they stay home at times because of fear of crime. The elderly are most affected: nearly two-thirds report that they do not come home alone after dark and a similar number stay home at times because of fear of crime.

Neighbors frequently rely on each other to watch one another's apartments when they go out. Seventy-two percent reported making such arrangements.

There are many specific precautions that people mentioned they take to protect themselves and their apartments. Keeping the door locked (72%) and the windows locked (31%) were the two most common things mentioned. Many people are careful not to open the door unless they know the person (25%).

When people go out many intentionally leave the lights on (33%) or the radio and TV on (33%). Over half (55%) have installed extra locks when they moved into their current apartments, and a small number (8%) even installed alarm systems or bars and gates on the windows. At least 25% feel their dogs help protect their apartments and one out of every six households said they keep some implement handy to defend themselves (sticks, guns, knives, etc.). A few families said they try to have someone home all the time, and others say they use prayer to protect themselves.

A number of detailed questions were asked to find out the extent of crime in the neighborhood. (Table XI) The people interviewed were asked to report if they or any member of their household had experience with certain kinds of crime in the previous year. It is not clear how accurate these figures are since it is probable that in some cases there were incidents that people did not report. On the other hand, the figures may be a little too high because in some cases the same incident appears to have been reported in more than one category. Nevertheless, these are a relatively good estimate of crime in the neighborhood during the last year.

There were five kinds of property crime dealt with: burglary, attempted burglaries, mailbox theft, theft of cars or other things outside the house, and vandalism. Half the households interviewed had experiences with at least one kind of property crime, and many had experience with more than one kind of property crime.

EXPERIENCE WITH CRIME  
IN THE LAST YEAR

<u>Property Crimes</u>	% Reporting Experience	Average Number of Incidents
Burglary	24.6 %	1.5
Attempted Burglary	18.8	1.5
Theft from Mailbox (Real and attempted)	19.8	2.3
Theft of car and other things outside house	14.6	1.4
andalism	12.2	1.6

Personal Crimes

Pickpocketing	7.4	1.1
Purse Snatching		
(Robbery <u>without</u> force or threat of force)		
Mugging (Robbery) <u>with</u> force or threat of force	8.2	1.6
Other Physical Attacks	7.1	1.2

Total Property Crimes	50.0	2.7
Total Personal Crimes	18.7	1.7
Total with some experience with crime	56.0	—

Burglary: One quarter (25%) of the households reported burglaries. The most frequently stolen items were: TV, money, stereos, clothing, bicycles, radio and other small appliances. More unusual were the theft of such things as the door locks itself, shoes, a set of towels, and breakfast cereal and milk. Burglars usually entered through the front door, windows, and even the basement or ceiling.

Attempted Burglary: Nearly one fifth (18.8%) of the families reported one or more attempted burglaries. Evidence of the attempt was usually a jammed door or broken window.

Theft from Mailbox: One fifth of the families had experienced successful or attempted mailbox theft, and most of them reported more than one incident. Checks, food stamps and other mail were stolen, and one family reported that even the entire mailbox was stolen. Homeowners reported the lowest rate of mailbox theft and renters the highest.

Theft of car or other property outside house: About 15% of the families reported a crime in this category. Only some of these involved theft of the car itself. Much more common were things taken out of the car (tape deck, CB radio, battery, tires, hub caps, tool box) or from outside the house (children's toys, bikes, chairs, tables, brooms, mops, flower pots and even Christmas decorations and clothes from the line).

Vandalism: One out of eight families experienced some form of vandalism to their houses or cars. Most incidents involved broken windows.

Members of almost one fifth of the households interviewed experienced some form of personal crime such as purse snatching or pickpocketing, mugging and assault. Between 7% and 8% reported

each of these crimes (including threats and attempts as well as actual robberies or assaults).

The elderly reported the same number or slightly fewer property crimes than other residents, but substantially fewer personal crimes (less than 5% in total).

About one third of the people experiencing crimes said they did not report any to the police. The reasons most cited for not going to the police were that they felt nothing much could be done, it wasn't really important enough, or that the police would not want to be bothered.

Most residents feel the police do not respond promptly to calls. Only 18% said that the police usually come right away or within twenty minutes when called. Almost one third estimated twenty minutes to one hour and another third said more than one hour.

When asked to rate the job the Newark Police Department does protecting people in this neighborhood, only 20% said it was good or very good. More than a third rated the department's work as bad or very bad.

Residents clearly look to the police to deal with the problem of crime. When asked what should be done about the problem of crime in the neighborhood, more than two thirds responded more police protection in general was needed or specifically more police patrols. A number of people also mentioned the need for jobs and recreational activities for teenagers, and the possibility of neighbors acting as block watchers.

## E. HOUSING

### 1. Renters and Residents of Cooperative Apartments

Tenants represent 70% of those interviewed and another 6% live in cooperative apartments. More than one fifth of the tenants live in owner-occupied buildings. The landlords of 16% live in the neighborhood, 22% in other parts of Newark and 40% elsewhere.

Half of all renters and co-op members experienced some kind of heating or maintenance problem in the last year. However, only one third of the tenants in owner-occupied housing reported such problems. The most common problems mentioned (and the percent reporting each) are:

	%
1. Lack of heat or hot water	66
2. Roaches	60
3. Rats	50
4. Plumbing	50
5. Problems with walls, ceilings, floors	36
6. Condition of the windows	30
7. Kitchen or bathroom fixtures	25
8. Condition of hallways or stairs	23
9. Leaking roof	21
10. Paint	21
11. Entrance door	12
12. Electricity	3
13. Other	5

The landlord or management make repairs within three days in nearly half the households. However, nearly a fifth report that things are almost never fixed.

The average rent paid in the area was \$178.00. This is known as contract rent because it is what the tenant pays the landlord directly. Usually this amount includes heat, and only sometimes, gas and electricity. In the West Side area 80% of the tenants said their rent covers heat, but only 30% have their gas included and less than 10% electricity.

The Census Bureau and other housing specialists usually estimate the gross rent which includes what heat and utilities would cost if the tenants had to pay for them themselves. This figure is used to compare rents and to calculate the percent of a tenant's income that he or she pays in rent.

Since no attempt was made in this survey to find out how much people pay for heat, gas and electricity, all calculations (e.g. rent/income ratio, rent per room, etc.) will be based on contract rent. The real housing cost to most residents would be higher were heat and utility costs added in.

One of the main housing problems facing families in the West Side Area is the exceedingly high proportion of their incomes that they are paying in rent. Most housing specialists and government housing subsidy programs use 25% as a rule of thumb that a family "should" pay for rent. For low income families even 25% is really too high because it cuts into necessary expenditures for food, clothing, transportation, etc. The proportion of income paid for rent is also known as the rent/income ratio.

In the West Side Area 75% of the families are paying more than 25% of their incomes for rent. (Table XIII) For those with yearly incomes below \$6,000, over 90% paid more than 25% of their incomes for rent. Perhaps more alarming is the finding that nearly half of the families in the low income range paid more than 50%

Things have gotten substantially worse since 1970 when median rent in the West Side Area was 35% of income for families with incomes under \$5,000. Table XIII indicates that by 1979 that ratio had increased dramatically to between 40 and 50%. The ratios of rent to income for each income level in the West Side area in 1979 are similar to the ones found in a study of rental housing in New York City in 1978.\*

\*Source: Peter Marcuse, Rental Housing in the City of New York - Supply and Condition 1975-1978, Jan., 1979

TABLE XII

PERCENT OF INCOME PAID FOR RENT  
(TENANTS AND CO-OP RESIDENTS)

Annual Income	Total	Under 25%	25% - 35%	35% - 50%	More than 50%
under \$6,000	100.0	8.7	12.6	33.0	45.6
over \$6,000	100.0	50.0	25.8	24.2	0.0
Total	100.0	24.2	17.6	29.7	28.5

TABLE XIII

## AVERAGE RENT AND RENT/INCOME RATIO BY INCOME LEVEL

Income	Average Contract Rent	Average Rent/Income Ratio
under \$4,000	\$166	49.5%
\$4 - 6,000	\$167	40.1%
\$6 - 8,000	\$196	33.6%
\$8 - 10,000	\$176	23.5%
\$10 - 15,000	\$176	16.9%
\$15 - 20,000	\$205	14.1%
\$20 - 25,000	\$221	11.8%
over \$25,000	\$165	7.9%

The elderly and Puerto Ricans had lower average rents than the population as a whole, but since their incomes are also lower, the rent income ratio is similar to other families in the same income category.

More than half the renters felt that their rents are "about right" for the quality of housing they occupy, although about a fourth believed it was "much too high". Those families with the lowest incomes were more likely to feel that their rents were "much too high".

The average number of rooms in the West Side Area for renters and co-op families is 4.6. Nearly half the apartments had five rooms. Since the average family size in the area is 3.9 people there would not appear at first glance, to be any overcrowding. However 15% of the families have more than one person per room, a standard that housing experts consider to indicate overcrowding. By contrast, in New York City in 1978 only 6.5% of the households were as overcrowded.\*

The average monthly rent per room was \$35.00 for 4, 5 and 6 room apartments (which represents 83% of those in the neighborhood).

Nearly half the tenants and co-op residents said they have thought of buying a house. Only 8% of these said they would consider buying in the neighborhood and only another 13% would like to buy in other parts of Newark (principally Weequahic and Vailsburg). The rest preferred nearby towns (23%), somewhere else in New Jersey (25%) or another state (27%). When asked why they would not buy a house in the neighborhood, most residents mentioned what they consider to be bad conditions in the neighborhood and their concern about crime.

## 2. Homeowners

Nearly a quarter (23%) of the people interviewed are homeowners. Almost all of them (90%) took out a mortgage when they bought their homes. The majority (58%) of these mortgages were obtained from banks and a fourth (27%) from finance companies. The remainder came from previous owners or other individuals. About 60% of the mortgages (from banks and finance companies) were government insured FHA or VA mortgages. More than a third were regular mortgages.

About a fourth of the homeowners have ever applied for a home improvement loan, two-thirds from banks and one-third from finance companies. Only one of these financial institutions was in the neighborhood. The rest were evenly divided between other parts of Newark and other cities (such as Jersey City, South Orange, Montclair and Maplewood). Forty percent had their loan applications rejected.

Homeowners were asked what they see as the main advantages and disadvantages in owning a home. The main advantages included: privacy; having a place you feel is yours; a sense of security because you can't be evicted; a good investment; you don't have to pay rent or have problems with the landlord; and it's good for children.

The main problems mentioned involved the costs of heating, taxes and repairs. Also expressed were concerns about abandoned buildings, vandalism and other problems in the neighborhood, as well as occasional problems with tenants.

#### F. SHOPPING

Neighborhood residents do most of their convenience shopping in the neighborhood, a large part of their food shopping, and buy things like clothing and furniture downtown.

Only 40% say they do most of their shopping in the neighborhood, although at least half of the elderly residents shop principally in the neighborhood. Almost all the people at least do some of their shopping in the neighborhood.

When shopping in the neighborhood, residents of Areas 1 and 4 shop mostly on 16th Avenue and in local corner stores. People from all areas in the neighborhood shop on Springfield Avenue especially those in Area 2 who do almost all their neighborhood shopping there. Only residents in Area 3 shop on South Orange Avenue, and not that many shop there. Puerto Ricans are more likely to shop in local corner stores than other residents.

Local convenience shopping done overwhelmingly in the neighborhood includes: small food items (95% in neighborhood), drug store (72%), hardware stores (77%), dry cleaners (89%), laundry (91%) and hairdresser or barbers (81%) (Table XIV). When these services or stores are patronized outside the neighborhood, it is almost always in Irvington or downtown. In many cases people do their own laundry and hair styling at home.

Downtown is still dominant when it comes to purchases of men's women's and children's clothing, shoes, furniture and appliances. Between 5 and 10% make their clothing and shoe purchases in Irvington, and some 10 to 14% shop at a variety of suburban malls in New York City. Only 3% to 9% buy clothing or shoes in the neighborhood. The majority still buy furniture and appliances downtown, although a higher percent (around 15%) buy these items in the neighborhood.

## XIV Where Neighborhood Residents Shop (in percent)

Neighborhood	Neighborhood Ave.	Springfield	Irvington	Downtown	Other	% Dwell Use
<u>Small Food Items</u>	95%				5.0	-
Laundry	91					55
Dry Cleaners	89		6	3		13
Hair dresser/Barber	81		3	8		38
Hardware	77		9	4		3
Drug Store	72		12	10		-
<u>Downtown</u>						
Men's Clothing	7		6	77	10	
Children's Clothing	3		10	75	11	21
Women's Clothing	9		9	73	14	
Shoes	7		11	71	10	
Appliances	16		10	63	11	
Furniture	15		5	58	13 + <sup>Refugees</sup> <del>Refugees</del> 22%	22
<u>Food*</u>						
Weekly Food Shopping	21	30	25		40	
Fresh Meat, Fish + Vegetables	30	22	19		20 + <sup>Meat Packing</sup> Houses 18%	
<u>Various Places</u>						
Post Office	10	60	5	22	3	10
Bank	16	19	12	38	14	21
Shoe Repairs	42	-	3	51	5	26
Restaurant	54	-	12	20	13	50

\* percentages add to more than 100% because many people shop at more than one place

\*\* 50% did not give a specific restaurant or place, or said they didn't go to restaurants

The elderly are less likely to shop for furniture and appliances and when they do, it tends to be more in the neighborhood than the rest of the population.

More than three-fourths of the residents do their major food shopping in Irvington and on Springfield Avenue (which many consider to be outside their immediate neighborhood). Nevertheless, around 40% also shop for food further away, sometimes at quite a distance. Those people who shop on Springfield Avenue and in Irvington, usually shop at Foodtown. Eighty percent of the elderly shop at Foodtown. Other neighborhood stores mentioned include the Red Star Market and the 303 Meat Market. Shoprite and Pathmark were mentioned by those shopping outside the area. In addition, many people buy fresh meats and fish at Meat Packing houses and other stores on Orange and Mulberry Streets.

There is another category of shopping where it appears that neighborhood residents shop in a variety of different locations. The majority of the residents use the post office on Springfield Avenue. Only 10% in the neighborhood and 22% still go to the post office downtown. Banking is carried out in a number of locations. Nearly two fifths go to banks downtown, and nearly two fifths in the neighborhood and on Springfield Avenue. However, one fourth of the people go to banks outside of Newark, -- about half of these in Irvington, and the rest in other towns in northern New Jersey, and even as far away as Salem and Camden, New Jersey. Shoe repairs is one kind of convenience service that is not done principally in the neighborhood, since variety stores downtown offer relatively rapid repairs. The most popular restaurants are Burger Kings and MacDonalds. More than half the people eating at

restaurants go in the neighborhood, with a sizeable minority (20%) patronizing restaurants downtown.

Nearly three-fourths of the residents shop daily or several times a week in the neighborhood. Outside the neighborhood one-fourth shop once a week and more than 60% once or two times a month. The elderly tend to go shopping less frequently than the rest of the population.

Nearly half (43%) shop outside the neighborhood using their own car. Nearly a third get a ride with other people. Men are more likely to use their own car than women, but women are more likely to get a ride with other people. Only 11% report going shopping by bus, and 6% by taxi. Since most people consider their neighborhoods to be four square blocks or smaller, it is not surprising that 8% report that they walk when doing their shopping outside the neighborhood. When responding to this question, it is unclear whether the people being interviewed were thinking of major food shopping or of downtown clothes shopping. That may have affected the answers on the means of transportation.

When asked what kinds of new store residents would like to see in the neighborhood, the great majority mentioned a supermarket. A large number also indicated they would like some kind of shopping center in the area. Specific kinds of stores frequently noted were: variety store, clothing store, shoe store, drug store, specific kinds of food stores (bakeries, meat store, Hispanic food, etc.).

In addition to new stores, almost all the residents felt that lower prices would improve shopping opportunities substantially. Other improvements suggested included delivery services, better parking facilities, more Hispanic food in general, more cashiers, better quality food and recreation for children.

#### G. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

The survey tried to find out to what extent neighborhood residents are active and involved in different types of community, social, civic and religious groups. The two types of organizations which had the greatest participation were church groups (40%) and Parent Teacher Associations (24%). The vast majority of PTA members were involved in PTA's in the neighborhood, while only 40% of the members of church groups said these groups were located in the neighborhood. It is likely that people continued to belong to the churches in the neighborhood where they lived previously. The only organization involving at least 10% of those surveyed were block associations. Residents of cooperative apartments and homeowners were more likely to be members of PTA's, church groups and block associations than tenants.

Approximately 4 - 5% of the residents are involved in each of the following: tenants organizations (20% of co-op residents) senior citizens groups, sports and social clubs, and unions. Very few people reported membership in civic, political or civil rights groups.

Members of PTA's and tenants groups usually attend meetings once a month, while church group members tend to participate once a week.

When asked if they were aware of any community organizations or block association working to improve the conditions of the neighborhood, only one third responded that they were aware of such groups. Two-thirds of those who are aware of such groups mentioned Tri-City Citizens Union for Progress (nearly 80% of those showing such awareness in Area 1, and all the cooperative residents). The rest mentioned specific block associations.